



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>

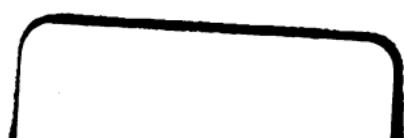
LECTURES  
TO MOTHERS



**600008288W**

*41.*

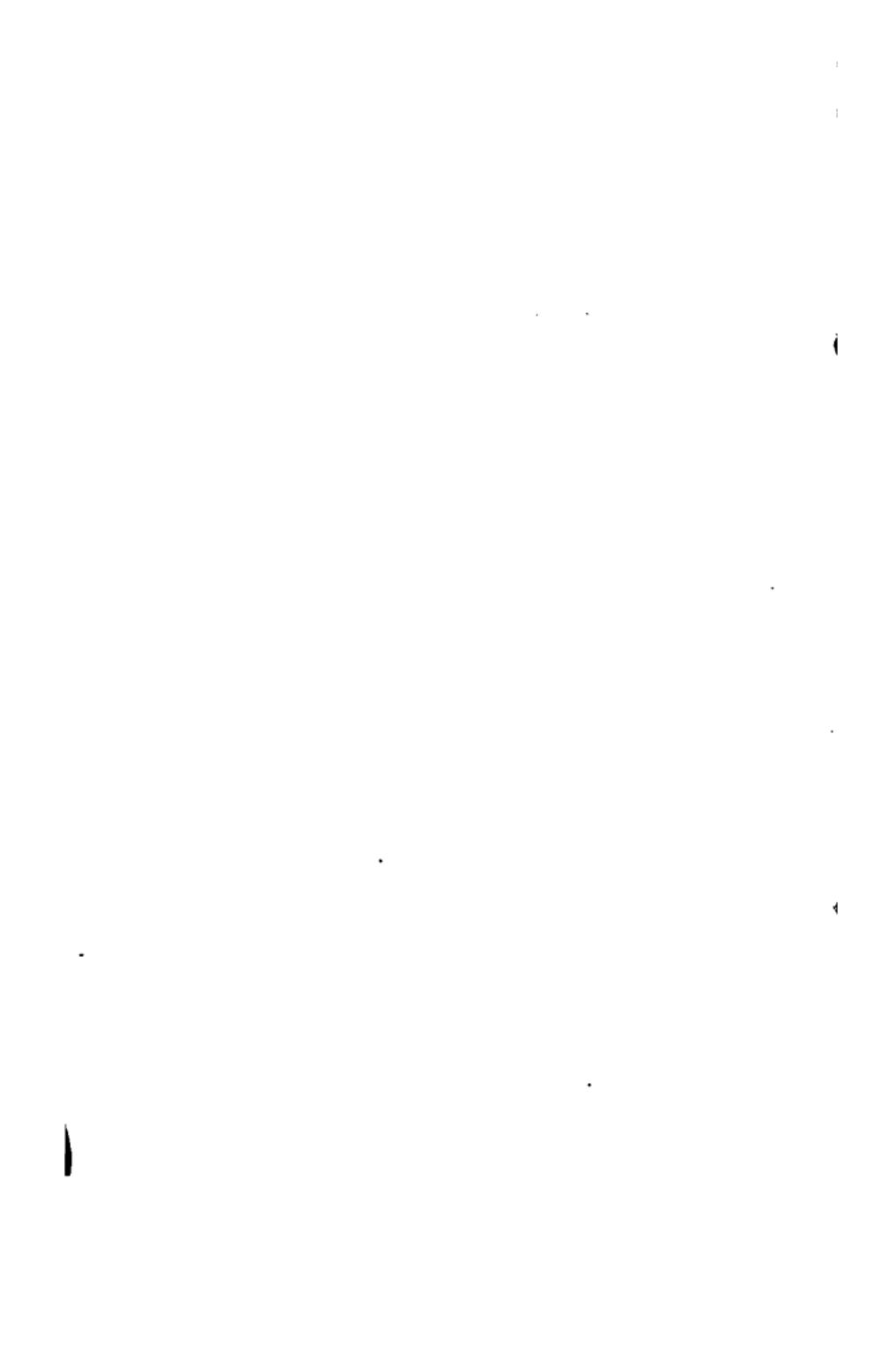
*103.*







**THREE LECTURES**  
**TO**  
**CHRISTIAN MOTHERS.**



# THREE LECTURES

TO

## CHRISTIAN MOTHERS.

BY

JAMES CAMERON,  
MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL, PORTOBELLO.

“To Mothers is committed the moulding of the whole mass of human mind, when it “turneth as wax to the seal.””

MRS SIGOURNEY.

EDINBURGH :  
WILLIAM INNES, HANOVER STREET ;  
M'LEHOSE AND NELSON, GLASGOW ; AND HAMILTON,  
ADAMS, AND CO., LONDON.

---

MDCCCLII.



**W. OLIPHANT JUN. AND CO., PRINTERS, SOUTH BRIDGE.**

## ADVERTISEMENT.

---

THESE Lectures were delivered a few months ago, in the ordinary course of pastoral instruction, to the Church over which the Author has been called, in the providence of God, to preside. In consequence of a request, subscribed by a number of Mothers belonging to various Christian denominations, he was induced shortly afterwards to re-deliver them in Edinburgh. They were prepared without any view to their publication, and had the writer consulted his own judgment and feelings merely, they certainly should not have been published ; for though the subject is one on which

he considered it his duty to address the people of his charge, it is not one on which he should have chosen to write for the press. The calls, however, for the publication of what was preached, were so many and urgent, that he felt it was one of those cases in which it becomes almost a duty to allow one's own opinion to give way to that of others.

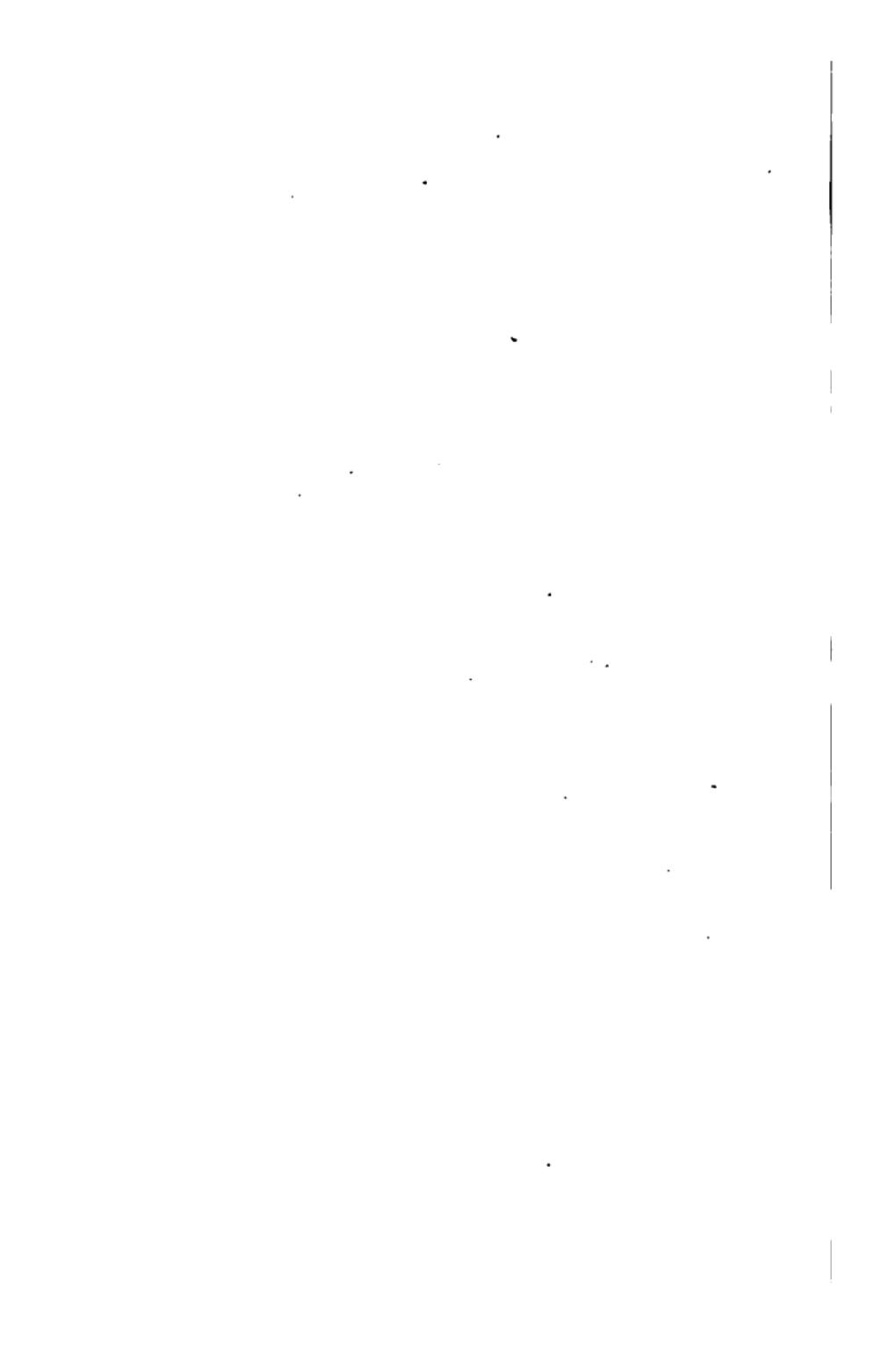
To the Great Head of the Church he commends this humble attempt to serve Him, with the earnest prayer that, imperfect as it is, it may be the means, in some small measure, of promoting His glory.

PORTOBELLO, *April 1841.*

## CQNTENTS.

---

	PAGE
LECTURE I.	
A MOTHER'S RESPONSIBILITY, . . . . .	9
LECTURE II.	
A MOTHER'S DUTY, . . . . .	28
LECTURE III.	
A MOTHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT, . . . . .	55



## LECTURE I.

---

### A MOTHER'S RESPONSIBILITY.

‘Her children arise up, and call her blessed.’—  
PROVERBS xxxi. 28.

I have read these words, not as a text on which I intend to comment, but merely as a motto to introduce my subject to your notice. By examining the context, you will perceive that the inspired writer here speaks of ‘a virtuous woman’ (verse 10); and, in verse 30, he describes this ‘virtuous woman’ as ‘a woman that feareth the Lord,—the fear of the Lord being the beginning of virtue, as it is ‘the beginning of wisdom.’ All seeming virtue, which does not originate in genuine godliness, is an illusion. In the sight of men, indeed, it may appear a fair and solid structure, but in the sight of God it is alike deformed and baseless.

There are three points to which I desire to direct your attention :—*First*, THE RESPONSIBILITY ;—*secondly*, THE DUTY ;—*thirdly*, THE ENCOURAGEMENT—of Christian mothers.

I say CHRISTIAN MOTHERS, for it is to such specially, that I address myself. And it may not be out of place, before entering on the illustration of the topics I have named, to explain what I mean by the term *Christian*, as here used.

There is nothing more common than the misapplication of words, and perhaps there are few words more frequently and more dangerously misapplied than this. In the apostolic age, the term ‘Christian’ was restricted to those who gave credible evidence of being the children of God by faith in his Son ; but since that time its application has been so widely extended, that it is not unfrequently employed merely as a convenient term of geographical distinction, being applied indiscriminately to all who inhabit certain countries, comprehended under the general name of ‘Christendom.’ The world’s population is divided into Pagans, Mohammedans, Jews, and Christians ; and all who are

neither Pagans, Mohammedans, nor Jews, are of course Christians. Now, it were useless to quarrel with this misapplication of the word; you may as soon attempt to chain the winds, as to fix down words to their original acceptation. I only warn you that, when I use the term, I do so, not in this lax and unscriptural sense, but in the sense in which I believe it to have been used in the apostolic age, as denoting those only of whom it could be believed, in the judgment of a discriminating charity, that they were 'born again,'—'renewed in the spirit of their minds.' That this was the original application of the name, is evident from the account we have of its imposition:—'The disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.'<sup>1</sup> Those who were called Christians were disciples—disciples, that is, of Christ; and what it is to be a disciple of Christ, we learn from Christ himself, when he said to 'those Jews who believed on him,'—'If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.'<sup>2</sup> A disciple of Christ, then, is one who continues in

<sup>1</sup> Acts xi. 26.

<sup>2</sup> John viii. 31, 32.

Christ's word—who remains stedfast in the faith of the doctrine which He taught, and in the practice of the duties which He enjoined ; giving himself up implicitly to His guidance, teaching, and direction. A disciple is one who '*knows the truth*',—knows it, not as a subject of abstract speculation merely, but as a living, life-giving, operating principle ;—knows it in all its enlightening, quickening, cheering, humbling, purifying, soul-transforming power. And this truth '*makes him free*'—free from the condemnatory sentence of the broken law—free from the fear of death and hell—free from hard and distrustful thoughts of God—free from the snare of the Devil, who had carried him captive at his will—free from the power of sin, whose willing slave he had been—free from the sinful maxims, and practices, and trammels of the world.

Such is a disciple of Christ, and he only who is a disciple of Christ is truly a *Christian*,—for they were 'the disciples' who 'were called Christians first in Antioch.' A Christian is *one who is in Christ*, and 'if any man be in Christ he is a new creature ; old things have passed

away ; behold, all things are become new.'<sup>1</sup> A Christian is *a friend of Christ*, and ' ye are my friends,' saith Christ, ' if ye do whatsoever I command you.'<sup>2</sup> A Christian is *one who has the hope of being with Christ for ever* ; and ' every man that hath this hope in Him, purifieth himself, even as He is pure.'<sup>3</sup> A Christian is *one who has the Spirit of Christ* ; for, ' if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His.'<sup>4</sup>

These are the tests by which we may ascertain whether or not we are Christians indeed ; and it is of infinite moment that this be ascertained. It can do us no good, but only evil, to assume the name, unless we possess the character with which alone that name can be rightfully associated. Alas ! what multitudes deceive themselves with regard to this, forgetting the solemn declaration of the Saviour—' Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven ; but he that doeth the will of my Father, which is in heaven.'<sup>5</sup> There are many who think they know Christ,

<sup>1</sup> 2 Cor. v. 17.    <sup>2</sup> John xv. 14.    <sup>3</sup> 1 John iii. 3.

<sup>4</sup> Romans viii. 9.    <sup>5</sup> Matthew vii. 21.

to whom He will say, ‘*I never knew you.*’ And why? Because they were not ‘like Him,’—they had not ‘the Spirit of Christ,’—they were ‘workers of iniquity.’—And as soon might we expect to see the Redeemer abdicate His throne, and resign the sceptre of His dominion, as to see Him acknowledge as one of His, a ‘worker of iniquity.’ ‘What fellowship hath light with darkness, or what concord hath Christ with Belial?’ The day of the Lord will make many fearful revelations, and cause many fearful disappointments. If we deceive ourselves now, we shall be undeceived at last when it is too late.—‘The fire shall try’ every man’s profession, as well as ‘every man’s work, of what sort it is.’

But we proceed to our immediate subject. The magnitude of your **RESPONSIBILITY**, christian mothers, appears from the following considerations:—

1. **YOUR CHILDREN HAVE BEEN COMMITTED TO YOUR CARE BY GOD.** They are God’s property; He had a right to dispose of them as seemed good in His own sight. He has seen fit to entrust them for a time to you, and He expects that you will keep in mind the end for

which they are given you, namely, that you may train them for His service, and for the enjoyment of his presence for ever. How precious the deposit! Immortal souls.—How solemn the charge! To train these souls for God.—How weighty, therefore, the responsibility!

And on you, christian mothers, this responsibility chiefly rests. No doubt the father of your children shares it with you, but by far the greater part of it rests on *you*. The father is not so constantly beside the objects of your joint care as you are. The first few years, especially, of your children's lives, are spent almost entirely under your eye, and, in the most of cases, very little under that of the father. But it is during these first few years that their character will probably be formed for eternity. Principles are then implanted—prejudices are then formed—impressions are then made, which, throughout the whole of the future duration of their existence, will powerfully influence them either for good or evil. How awfully important, then, is the situation in which God has placed *you*!—He has committed to your care, the formation of the principles of a deathless mind. Of all cre-

ated beings, *you* have most power over that mind. On you, more than on any other ;—yea, upon you, more than upon all others united, depend, under God, the future character and destiny of those who address you by the endearing name of MOTHER. As you fondly gaze on the lineaments of your infant charge, delighting to trace the first dawning of intelligence, and to mark the earliest indications of a love responsive to your own, let this thought pervade your mind,—‘ My child belongs to God.’ When your heart yearns over your offspring with all a mother’s tenderness, and your eye glistens with the tear of deep unutterable affection, say to yourself, ‘ God demands of me that I train this child for His service.’ If, at any time, you feel that you are in danger of forgetting the solemn nature of the trust committed to you, ask yourself, ‘ How am I discharging my duty to *God’s children?*’

**2. EACH OF YOUR CHILDREN IS POSSESSED OF AN IMMORTAL SOUL.** If they were destined to live only during the few fleeting years allotted to man on earth, yet, considering the results of your training on their happiness or unhappiness

during that period, your responsibility would still be great. But what are 'threescore years and ten,' compared with an existence that shall never terminate? What is earthly happiness or unhappiness, compared with eternal bliss or woe? Recognise, then, in your children, immortal beings, whom no power in the universe can ever deprive of existence. That smiling babe, over whose cradle you delight to watch, has a soul which will either glow for ever with the rapture of the saints of God, filled to overflowing with Heaven's own blessedness, or thrill for ever with the anguish of the damned, filled to overflowing with the wrath of the sin-hating God. Yes, when the solid earth on which you tread, shall be no more; when these ethereal heavens which are spread over you shall have been wrapped together as a scroll, and put away; when the sun himself shall have been quenched in eternal darkness, the soul of your child shall *still* exist. *That soul may be saved*, and if so, it will, as the eternal ages roll on in ceaseless succession, be moving forward in the expansion of its holy energies, and soaring upward, nearer and nearer to the throne of Heaven's King; for

ever advancing to higher and still higher degrees of holy happiness. Or *that soul may be lost*, and if so, it will, throughout eternity, be increasing in its capability of sinning and of suffering; sinking lower and lower in the pit of perdition; ‘beneath each deep’ finding still ‘some lower depth’ of misery—unmingled, unpitied, hopeless misery. And upon you, christian mother, more than upon any other being in the universe, it depends, under God, whether that soul shall be saved or lost. Oh how great your responsibility! words cannot utter it—the human mind cannot conceive it,—eternity alone will fully unfold it.

**3. IF GOD IS PLEASED TO SPARE YOUR CHILDREN TILL THEY ENTER ON THE BUSY SCENE OF LIFE, THEY WILL EXERT AN INFLUENCE ON THEIR FELLOW-CREATURES, THE EFFECTS OF WHICH WILL REMAIN THROUGHOUT ETERNITY.** And whether this influence shall be a good or an evil influence, depends mainly on you.

Look at your infant son. If you train that child aright, he may become a man of God, full of the Holy Ghost, and of faith; and then, whatever situation he may be called to fill, he

will be a living epistle of Christ, known and read of all men. By a holy, active, useful life, he will show forth the praises of Him who hath called him out of darkness into His marvellous light. He may occupy some place of power and trust, and be a source of blessing to all who come within the reach of his influence. He will be the poor man's friend, the deliverer of the needy, the succourer of the oppressed. Like Job, he will be 'eyes to the blind, and feet to the lame ;' 'the blessing of him that is ready to perish' will come upon him, and he will 'cause the widow's heart to sing for joy.'

He may be a minister of Christ, devoting all his energies to the advancement of the Saviour's kingdom ; spending his life in untiring exertions to enlighten the ignorant, to convince the gainsayer, to reclaim the wanderer, to confirm the wavering, to build up the children of God in the faith and obedience of the Gospel, and lead them on to victory—to heaven. While he lives, he may be a channel of divine communication, through which heaven's richest blessings shall flow to multitudes ; and on the great day he may be hailed as the spiritual father of thousands

of saved souls, who shall for ever bless God that he was born, and that his mother trained him in the way of righteousness.

He may be a christian missionary, sent forth to distant lands to declare among the heathen the unsearchable riches of Christ. By the blessing of God on his exertions, whole tribes and nations may be reclaimed from barbarism, idolatry, and vice, and taught to 'worship the Lord in the beauty of holiness.' The abodes of lawless oppression may become the dwelling-place of civilization and peace ; the frantic yell and the savage war-cry may give place to the voice of prayer, and the sweet melody of heaven's praises. Generations yet unborn may bless him as the father of their country, and to the latest ages of the world's history, his name may be a household word, which the mothers of far distant lands shall teach their infant children to lisp, with feelings of fervent gratitude to God, who raised him up as a light to the Gentiles, and sent him forth to bless the nations with the knowledge of salvation through the blood of Christ.

On the other hand, if you train him *not* for God, he may live to be a wicked man, an enemy

of the cause of Christ. Then, in whatever sphere he moves, he will be a source of evil influence to all with whom he comes in contact. He will stand forth in the world, a moral Upas tree, shedding around him desolation and death. He may hold some public office, and abuse the power it confers, by prostituting it to the purposes of oppression and wrong. He may be a public teacher of error—a minister of Satan—devoting himself to the unhallowed work of spreading abroad pestilential and damnable heresies, deceiving the souls of the simple, and peopling the regions of woe. He may be an apostle of infidelity—himself led captive by the devil, and employed as the devil's agent in rivetting on others the chains of hell.

But though he should not move in a public sphere, though he should occupy the most retired and private situation, he will still exert an influence on others. No man can live at all, without exercising an influence, greater or less, on his fellow-men. As soon might we attempt to rid ourselves of our personal identity, as to rid ourselves of our influence on society. Whether we choose to have it so or not, an influence,

either for good or evil, is going forth from us every day we live, and contributing its part to the formation of the character of those around us. And this influence may be greater than we are aware. A single word, inadvertently spoken, and perhaps forgotten by the speaker as soon as uttered, may be the first link of a chain of events, on which hang the interests of the remotest generations, or even the eternal state of thousands of immortal souls.

Mothers! think of this, and tremble at the position which you occupy. To you is committed the training of those who are to form the opinions, and guide the conduct, and direct the destinies, of the next generation. Every child which grows up will be a centre of emanation, from which a saving or a destroying influence will continually flow forth. I have spoken only of the influence of your sons, but the same remarks apply, in the principle of them, to your daughters likewise. Their influence may be of a less direct and imposing kind than that of the other sex, but it will not be less powerful. It has been remarked by an eloquent French writer, that 'Whatever may be the customs and

laws of a country, women always give the tone to morals. Whether slaves or free, they reign, because their empire is that of the affections.' 'They make men what they are. It seems as though nature had made man's intellect depend upon their dignity, as she has made his happiness depend upon their virtue.'<sup>1</sup> In course of

<sup>1</sup> Since the above remarks were written, the author has met with a Tract, entitled, 'Female Influence and Obligations,' originally published in the United States. The following sentences deserve to be seriously considered.

' Females, you exert a vast moral influence on SOCIETY AT LARGE. It is not your province to fill the offices of public life ; but there is no department of human affairs, and no corner of the world, where your influence is not felt. In morals and religion, and every thing directly connected with them, your sex may do as much good or harm as is commonly effected by political power. What man would be a drunkard if sure to receive universal female scorn and abhorrence ? How long would theatres corrupt our towns ? How long would scenes of sin and gay dissipation, the dance, or ball-room, exist, if every female were to set her face against them, and go only where the voice of Christ and duty called her ? If the whole female world were to revere the Sabbath, and be found in the house of God, what a happy change would soon be effected !——'

' Reflect upon THE EVILS WHICH MUST BE THE CONSEQUENCE OF REFUSING to employ your influence in favour

time, the daughters you are now training, will themselves be the heads of families, and to them will be committed the formation of the character of the youth of the generation following. On them, perhaps, even more than on your sons, depend the character and complexion of that generation. What a responsibility, then, is yours! Realize it in all its magnitude, examine it in all its bearings ; and if you feel your spirit overwhelmed with the thought of it, flee to the rock that is higher than you, and let the earnest prayer ascend, ' O Lord ! undertake for me.'

#### 4. REMEMBER THAT YOU MUST GIVE ACCOUNT

of the Gospel. You are placed in a situation in which you must act. You must be the friends or the enemies of God. You might as soon renounce your existence as your influence. If it is not exerted for Christ, it must be employed against Him. If you do no good, you will accomplish much evil. And in such a world as this, it is much easier to do evil than to do good. A bad example, and perverted influence, fall in with the natural current of the heart and world ; and, on this principle a small effort may do great mischief. It is easier to destroy a hundred souls than to save one. What, then, must be the consequences of employing your influence and example against the cause of Jesus Christ ? This is the true state of the case, ' for those who are not FOR Christ are AGAINST him.'

TO THE JUDGE OF ALL OF THE MANNER IN WHICH YOU TRAIN THE CHILDREN HE HAS COMMITTED TO YOUR TRUST. It is always a solemn thing to realize the judgment of the great day ; but there is no view we can take of it more impressive than when we consider it in reference to the account which the Judge will require of parents, *as such*. Christian mother ! if you fail in your duty to your offspring,—if, in consequence of your neglect or unfaithfulness, they grow up to tread the path of the destroyer, and are at last found amongst the enemies of Christ, where will you hide your guilty head on the great day of the Lord ? or what answer will you return to the divine Judge when he demands an account of your work ? It is possible that your children may be lost through your unskillfulness or unwatchfulness, and yet your own soul saved. But surely in such a case, you will suffer loss, being saved only as through fire. And if there can be regrets felt, if there can be grief experienced, by those who, through the mercy of God, find themselves on the right hand of the Judge ; oh ! how deep will be *your* grief, how bitter *your* regrets, when you see the child-

ren of your bosom, the objects of your heart's warmest affection, ranged on the left hand, the place of the doomed ; and when you realize the fearful truth, that they are to be driven away in their wickedness, *you* being, in some degree at least, the guilty cause. The poignancy of a mother's grief on the death of her child, has become proverbial, and is esteemed the very perfection of human sorrow : but for a christian mother to see her child cast, soul and body, into hell, *there* to dwell for ever in the blackness of darkness, and to endure for ever the anguish of the worm that dieth not, and the fire that is not quenched,—oh ! there is something in *this* so unutterably awful, that the mind recoils with horror from the thought of it, and we are glad to turn away, and gaze no more on the dismal prospect. I shall not enlarge on a theme so painful ; but, christian mothers, if there be any terror in the thought of judgment,—if there be any danger of those you love being at last cast away,—if there be any anguish in the anticipation of your being separated from them for ever ; then, by the strength of that terror—by the magnitude of that danger—by the bitterness

of that anguish,—be persuaded to think of your responsibility,—to keep it before your minds, until the realization of it become a part of your very being, so that you may constantly act, in the important situation in which God has placed you, in a manner becoming those to whom so much has been committed.

## LECTURE II.

---

### A MOTHER'S DUTY.

‘Train up a child in the way he should go.’—  
PROVERBS xxii. 6.

THESE are the words of the wise man, ‘who spake as he was moved by the Holy Ghost.’ They are to be viewed, therefore, not as the admonition of a fellow-creature, but as the authoritative injunction of the God of heaven—the Governor of the universe.

Christian mothers! this injunction is addressed to you. In the former lecture I endeavoured to set before you your Responsibility; suffer me now to address you respecting your Duty.

1. If you would train up your children in the way they should go, it is necessary that you **CULTIVATE A DEEP AND ABIDING SENSE OF YOUR OWN INSUFFICIENCY.** I need say nothing, I

am persuaded, to convince you of the fact of your insufficiency ; if you have seriously reflected on the magnitude of your responsibility, you are ready to ask, ‘ *Who* is sufficient for these things ?’ Your work is to train immortal beings for God,—the same work, in substance, as that for which the christian ministry has been instituted ; and, in reference to *this* work, even the apostle of the Gentiles said, ‘ We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves.’<sup>1</sup> You are partakers of the same sinful nature with those whom you have to train, encompassed with all the weakness of fallen humanity, and subject to all its temptations.—You have to contend against your own sinful propensities—to watch over your own spirits—to strive with your own waywardness, and, in the midst of all this, to set before your children such an example of patience, forbearance, and holy living, as shall be a true and faithful comment on the sacred truths you teach them. If ever you become self-sufficient, be assured you will labour in vain ; ‘ for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.’

<sup>1</sup> 2 Corinthians iii. 5.

But why do I urge upon you the consideration of your insufficiency? Is it to sink you into despair? Nay, verily; that were a profitless, as well as a cheerless undertaking. It is to induce you, in utter hopelessness of accomplishing the desired result by your own wisdom or strength, to cast yourselves on the God of all wisdom and of all strength, for it is written, ‘Cast thy burden upon the Lord, and He will sustain thee.’<sup>1</sup> ‘He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength. Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fail; but they that WAIT UPON THE LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.’<sup>2</sup> You can have no fitness *for* your work, and no success *in* your work, but what comes from God. You cannot expect that God will grant this fitness and this success, unless you look to Him alone for them. But such is the natural un-

of the human heart to turn to God,  
only in Him, that it is not till we

are driven from every other refuge, and deprived of every other stay, that we cling to Him with the simple child-like dependence of those who have truly learned that there is no other God besides Jehovah ; that all power, and all wisdom, and all blessing are from Him ; and that without Him every effort must be vain, and every undertaking abortive. The absolute helplessness and moral impotency of fallen man, is one of the most important lessons we can be taught ; but alas ! it is one of the most difficult for proud human nature to learn. The Spirit of God can teach it, and blessed are they who, being taught by the divine Spirit their own utter helplessness, are taught at the same time that they have a God to go to, who can furnish them richly with all they need.

Again, then, I repeat, cultivate a sense of your insufficiency for the great work to which God has called you ; and let this be so thoroughly inwoven in the very texture of your minds,—let it so thoroughly pervade your whole habits of thinking and feeling, that you shall be kept in the very lowest depths of self-distrust, feeling that your only safety is in clinging, as with a

death-grasp, to the soul-sustaining declaration, ' My grace is sufficient for thee, for my strength is perfected in weakness.'<sup>1</sup> It is only when a deep sense of insufficiency, and a strong confidence in God, are combined, that you are at all likely to be successful in your arduous work. Your sense of insufficiency will make you cautious, tender, watchful, prayerful ; and your confidence in God will nerve your soul, and strengthen you to grapple with the difficulties which you have to encounter.

2. If you would train up your children in the way they should go, it is necessary that you **DILIGENTLY CULTIVATE YOUR OWN MINDS, IMPUING THEM WITH SOUND PRINCIPLES, AND STORING THEM WITH USEFUL KNOWLEDGE.** It may be said, that this ought to have been done before you occupied the position you do,—and it is true. But it will be acknowledged, we think, by almost all who are capable of forming a judgment on the subject, that, generally speaking, it is not done before, and that, in nine tenths, perhaps, of those cases in which the mind has been fitted for the efficient discharge

<sup>1</sup> 2 Corinthians xii. 9.

of a mother's duties, its cultivation has been chiefly, if not entirely, effected, at a period subsequent to that allotted to what is termed *Education*. The education which females generally receive in youth, is but ill fitted for enabling them rightly 'to mould the mass of human mind.' Education, properly so called, is the training of the intellect, the conscience, and the affections. But is this a description of female education as it actually is, even with all the boasted improvements of modern times? Is that education, in any prominent degree, the education of *mind* or *heart* at all, in any form? Alas! it is too frequently the education of *manner* only. The useful is sacrificed to the ornamental. The casket is embellished with all kinds of tinsel work, which may attract the admiration of the beholder, while the invaluable jewel it contains is left to comparative neglect. Let it not be supposed that we undervalue accomplishments. We believe them to be highly valuable—much more valuable than many who eagerly pursue them seem to be aware.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'There is a deep influence hidden under the beautiful arts,—an influence far deeper than the world in its

But they may be too dearly purchased. And assuredly they *are* too dearly purchased, whenever they so engross the time and attention as to leave little or no opportunity for the cultivation of the mind itself. It is distressing to think, that while so much depends on the training of the female mind, so little provision is made for that training being effective. Napoleon once asked Madame Campan what the French nation most needed in order that her youth might be properly educated. Her reply was comprised in one word,—that word was—‘Mothers.’ And it was a wise reply. Not the French nation only,—*the world* needs mothers—Christian, intelligent, well-trained thoughtlessness, or the worldly student in his vanity, ever can know,—an influence refining, consoling, elevating; they afford a channel into which the lofty aspirings, the unsatisfied yearnings of the pure and elevated in soul may pour themselves. The perception of the beautiful is, next to the love of our fellow-creatures, the most purely unselfish of all our natural emotions, and is, therefore, a most powerful engine in the hands of those who regard selfishness as the giant passion, whose castle must be stormed before any other conquest can be begun, and in vanquishing whom, all lawful and innocent weapons should by turns be employed.’—*Woman’s Mission.*

mothers, to whom the destinies of the rising generation may safely be entrusted. A distinguished philosopher has remarked, that 'all the world is but the pupil and disciple of female influence';—how important, then, that females should be fitted for their work! And is the education they generally receive in youth such as is likely to fit them for that work? No one acquainted with the subject will reply in the affirmative. The end desired seems rather that they should be qualified for securing admiration and applause, than for moulding the minds and forming the characters of those who are to be the future defenders of the faith,—the ministers of the gospel, the philosophers, the legislators, of the next generation.

I feel that I cannot do better than present you with the remarks of one of your own sex on this subject,—one who is well entitled to an attentive hearing—I mean the author of '*Woman's Mission*':—

‘What, then, is the true object of female education? The best answer to this question, is a statement of future duties, for it must never be forgotten, that if education be not a training

for future duties, it is nothing. The ordinary lot of woman is to marry. Has any thing in these educations prepared her to make a wise choice in marriage? To be a mother? Have the duties of maternity—the nature of moral influence, been pointed out to her? Has she ever been enlightened as to the consequent unspeakable importance of personal character as the source of influence? In a word, have any means, direct or indirect, prepared her for her duties? No! But she is a linguist, a pianist, —graceful, admired. What is that to the purpose? The grand evil of such an education is the mistaking means for ends: a common error, and the source of half the moral confusion existing in the world. It is the substitution of a part for the whole. The time when young women enter upon life is the one point to which all plans of education tend, and at which they all terminate; and to prepare them for that point is the object of their training. Is it not cruel to lay up for them a store of future wretchedness, by an education which has no period in view but one,—a very short one, and the most unimportant and irresponsible of the whole of

life? Who that had the power of choice, would choose to buy the admiration of the world for a few short years, with the happiness of a whole life? The temporary power to dazzle and to charm, with the growing sense of duties undertaken only to be neglected, and responsibilities, the existence of which is discovered perhaps simultaneously with that of an utter inability to meet them? Even if the mischief stopped here, it would be sufficiently great; but the craving appetite for applause, once roused, is not so easily lulled again. The moral energies, pampered by unwholesome nourishment,—like the body when disordered by luxurious dainties,—refuse to perform their healthy functions, and thus is occasioned a perpetual strife and warfare of internal principles; the selfish principle still seeking the accustomed gratification, the conjugal and maternal prompting to the performance of duty. But duty is a cold word, and people, in order to find pleasure in duty, must have been trained to consider their duties as pleasures. This is a truth at which no one arrives by inspiration. And in this moral struggle, which, like all other struggles, produces

lassitude and distaste of all things, the happiness of the individual is lost, her usefulness destroyed, her influence most pernicious. For nothing has so injurious an effect on temper and manners, and consequently on moral influence, as the want of that internal quiet which can only arise from the accordance of duty with inclination.'<sup>1</sup>

I have a double object in view in directing your attention so prominently to this point:—that you may bring these sentiments to bear on the education of your daughters; and that you may feel the necessity, whatever may have been the nature and extent of your own previous education, of continuing diligently to educate yourselves, and add to your resources. You will find that there is need of all, for you have a great work given you to do. Especially let the sacred truths of God's word be the subject of your constant study. Be not content with a

<sup>1</sup> *Woman's Mission*, pages 66–68, eighth edition. The author begs to recommend this work to the serious perusal of those for whom it is written. Every female, whether a mother or not, ought carefully to study it. It is one of the good 'signs of the times,' that such a book is written by a woman.

superficial knowledge of 'the great things of God's law,' but seek to know them in all their depth and fulness, tracing their bearings and connexions, studying their harmonies and proportions; that thus, by having 'the word of Christ dwelling in you richly in all wisdom,' you may be 'thoroughly furnished unto all good works.'

But though the word of God must be your *chief* study, beware of supposing that it must be your *only* study. All truth is *from* God, and all truth may be made subservient to the great work of training your children *for* God. Indeed, if you confine your study to the Bible alone, you will not study it to the best advantage, for, without the knowledge which is derived from other sources, a great part of the Bible will be to you a sealed book. All the knowledge we can acquire, of whatever kind, and from whatever source, will, if rightly employed, aid us in our study of the Scriptures; and the wisdom of those who, decrying all kinds of secular knowledge, would limit us to the perusal of one book, even though that is God's own book, is of a piece with that of the fanatic who burned the

Alexandrian library, and justified the act by pleading that, if these books contained nothing more than was taught in the Koran, they were unnecessary, and if they contained more, they were pernicious. Let the mind take an extensive range,—as extensive as your time and circumstances will permit. If knowledge is power, then the more knowledge the more power. But mere power is not enough. Unless combined with benevolence, we have no security that it will be exercised for beneficial purposes. It may be employed to curse, not to bless,—to destroy, not to save. Let all your knowledge, therefore, be baptized into Christ. Bring it to the foot of the Cross, and there let it be solemnly dedicated to the service of Him who died that sinful men might live. Thus shall you possess power combined with benevolence, for the religion of the Cross is the religion of benevolence.

There is one department of knowledge which I would specially commend to your notice,—I mean the knowledge of the *mind* itself. It is with mind you have to deal in training your children, and unless you are in some measure acquainted with the laws by which it is govern-

ed, and the manner in which it discharges its various functions, you will find yourself frequently at a loss ; and more frequently still, you will fall into grievous blunders without being aware of them, till the result shows that there has been something wrong, though you know not what. The musician, though utterly ignorant of the internal mechanism of his instrument, may elicit from it the most melodious sounds. He may thus operate successfully enough *with* the instrument ; but he cannot operate successfully *on* the instrument. If it is out of tune, he cannot tune it ; if it is impaired, he cannot repair it : He must have recourse to some one who understands its structure, and knows the laws which regulate the conveyance of sound. He can *use* the instrument, but he cannot (if we may be allowed such an expression,) *train* the instrument. Even so,—if your business were merely to operate *by means of* mind already formed, you might do much, though ignorant of the structure of mind, though even here you would feel the disadvantage of ignorance,—but your business is to operate *on* mind itself,—to adjust the instrument,—to repair it when ini-

paired,—to tune it, when out of tune ; and how is this to be done, if you are ignorant of the principles of the mind which you have to train ?

3. IN ALL YOUR OWN CONDUCT, MANIFEST THE MOST UNDEVIATING CONSISTENCY. The adage, that 'example is more powerful than precept,' is so trite, that you are in little danger of being allowed to forget it. But there is another truth which is more apt to be lost sight of, namely, that children, even at a very early age, are eagle-eyed to observe the inconsistencies of a parent ; and the slightest inconsistency, though it be manifested only in a word or a look, lowers your influence over them in an inconceivable degree. When a child learns to distrust his mother, all her warnings, and admonitions, and remonstrances, however earnest and unremitting, fall powerless.<sup>1</sup> This is the

<sup>1</sup> The peculiar evil arising from want of consistency, is the want of trust or faith which it engenders. This is felt in the common intercourse with the world. In our relations with inconsistent persons, we are like mariners at sea without a compass. On the other hand, intercourse with consistent persons gives to the mind a sort of tranquillity, peculiarly favourable to happiness and virtue. \* \* \*

chief reason, it is to be feared, why we so frequently see the children of pious parents grow up impenitent. The example of their parents has

' The effect here produced upon children [*i. e.* by being under the management of inconsistent persons], is the same as that which long intercourse with the world produces in men ; only that the effect differs in proportion to their differing intellectual faculties. The child is annoyed, and knows not the cause of the annoyance ; the man is annoyed, and endeavours to lose the sense of discomfort in a universal scepticism as to human virtue, and a resolving of all actions into one principle, self-interest. He thus seeks to create a principle possessing the stability which he desires, but seeks in vain to find ; for, be it remembered, our love of moral stability is precisely as great as our love of physical change ;—another of the mysteries of our being. The effects on the man are the same as on the child,—he ceases to believe, and he ceases to venerate ; and the end is the most degrading of all conditions,—the abnegation of all abstract virtue, generosity or love. Now, into this state children are brought by the inconsistency of parents ; *i. e.* these young and innocent creatures are placed in a condition, moral and intellectual, which we consider an evil, even when produced by long contact with a selfish and unkind world. And thus they enter upon life, prepared for vice in all its forms, and scepticism in all its heart-withering tendencies. How can parents bear this responsibility ! There is something so touching in the simple faith of childhood,—its utter dependence,—its willingness to believe in the perfection of those to whom

not been uniformly consistent with their instructions, and therefore have these instructions been useless. A writer in an American periodical relates the following incident, which may illustrate these remarks :—

‘ A mother had a family of three interesting daughters, and requested me for a time to become their tutor. During the time I was thus employed, the pastor and an elder visited the house. The venerable minister affectionately inquired at the mother, if she was conscious of having faithfully discharged the duties of a christian mother to her impenitent children. The mother replied that she believed she had done all she could,—she had prayed for them, and talked with them, until it seemed to do no good. She professed great anxiety for them, and wished that they might be made the subjects of prayer. A few days after this visit, I called at my usual hour, and found that a lady of their acquaintance had stopped in for a fashionable call. She sat a few minutes, and was treated

it looks for protection ; that to betray that faith, to shake that dependence, seems almost akin to irreligion.’  
— *Woman’s Mission*, pp. 109-111.

very civilly by Mrs——, and when she rose to leave, was very warmly urged to sit longer. She declined this, and as she left, Mrs—— expressed the hope that they should have the pleasure of seeing her often. The hall-door had scarcely closed, when the mother turned round, in the presence of her daughters, and, with a petulant air, “*wondered how people could find so much time to walk about streets, and trouble their neighbours.*” Here, thought I, it is no very difficult thing to see why “it does no good” for the mother to “talk about religion” to her daughters. And I thought it must be impious mockery for that mother to pray for the conversion of her children, while she continued to set before them such an example.’

Mothers! watch your conduct. Your children watch it. Every expression of your countenance,—every word you utter,—every action they see you perform,—is scanned and scrutinized by them; and if they perceive that you act inconsistently; they will in their hearts despise you. And you cannot long deceive a child with regard to character;—the only sure way to appear consistent, is to be so.

4. BE FIRM AND UNBENDING IN THE EXERCISE OF YOUR AUTHORITY, REQUIRING, ON ALL OCCASIONS, IMPLICIT, UNHESITATING OBEDIENCE. Implicit submission to the authority of God is essential to true religion. And God has given you absolute authority over your child, that, by being habituated to the exercise of implicit submission to *your* will, he may be trained to the exercise of implicit submission to *His*. Until your child is able, in some measure, to judge for himself, you are to him in the place of God, and if you allow your will to be disputed,—if you shrink from the exercise of absolute, uncompromising authority,—you train your child to be a rebel against God. A mother's indulgence lays the foundation for disobedience and insubordination towards God; which, unless divine grace in future years prevent, must issue in the child's eternal ruin. And if you would have your authority regarded, it must be *perfect*. If even once you allow it to be successfully disputed, the consequences may be disastrous. There is no safety but in a uniform, unbending decision, so that your child may ever feel that there is but one question with which he has to do,

namely, ‘ What does my mother require ?’ and that, when this is known, it is utterly vain to think of questioning or disputing. This is a point of paramount importance. If you err here, you err fatally and irrecoverably.<sup>1</sup>

‘ ‘ The Rev. John Todd of Philadelphia, in a sermon to mothers, delivered before the New York “ City Maternal Association,” relates the following instance of a mother’s decision :—

‘ I could point you to a son, who cherishes the memory of his mother as something inexpressibly dear and sacred. She was a widow, and he, her only son. When a young man, he said or did something highly improper, in the presence of his sister and a cousin, both young ladies. His mother told him of his fault mildly and kindly, and requested him to make an apology to the girls. This he declined. She insisted upon it, and even laid her commands. He refused. She next requested him to go with her to his chamber in the third story. He complied. She then very coolly took the key, and told him, that she should lock the door, and he would neither see her face, nor receive food, till he submitted. The next day she called at the door of the prisoner, “ My son, are you ready to comply with my request ?” “ No, mother.” The second day the same question was asked, and the same answer received. The third day she went to the door, and said, “ James, you think that, by holding out thus, your mother will yield, and come to your terms ; but you do not know her. I am in the path of duty, and I shall not yield till the timbers of this house decay and fall, should I live so long.” That evening he would have

Let it not be said that the principle we inculcate is severe. It is not so. The most unbending authority may be blended with the most unwearied love. And the two ought ever to be blended. These are the two great principles of God's government, and your family government should resemble his. The unwearied exercise of love will prevent your authority from degenerating into harshness; the unbending exercise of authority will prevent your love from degenerating into foolish indulgence.

5. If you would train up your children in the way they should go, you must **RESTRAIN AND CURB THEIR WAYWARD PROPENSITIES.** Never forget that they possess a depraved nature. A son sent a message to his mother, but had no messenger. On the fourth day he promised to do whatever she required. She opened the door, and her pale, sickly-looking boy embraced her with tears, asked her pardon, and submitted to her requisition. He has since been seen to shed tears of gratitude over that decision and faithfulness, and to assert, with the utmost confidence, that it was this firmness in his widowed mother that saved him from irrevocable ruin.'

Some who read the above will probably think that this mother carried her decision too far. Let such answer the question, 'Which ought to have yielded, the mother or the son?'

ture, prone to all evil,—averse from all good: Beware, therefore, of allowing them to have *their own way*; THAT is the way which leadeth to death. Accustom them betimes to submit to restraint. Subject them to wholesome discipline. And do this in such a manner as shall prove, even to themselves, that it is done, not for the gratification of your passion, but for their profit. A child left to his *own way* will bring ruin on himself, and sorrow and disgrace on his parents. Remember the case of Adonijah. ‘His father had not displeased him at any time in saying, Why hast thou done so?’<sup>1</sup> in other words, he was a spoiled child. And what was the consequence? His father’s dying bed was disturbed by his treasonable machinations, and, in order to secure the peace of the kingdom, his own brother was obliged to issue an order for his death. Look at Eli. He was a good man, but a weak and irresolute parent. He allowed his sons to have their own way until he had lost his authority over them; and when at length he remonstrated with them on the wickedness of their conduct, his words were unheeded.

<sup>1</sup> 1. Kings i. 6.

ed,—he was too late in beginning. And oh ! how dolefully must the message of the Lord by Samuel have fallen upon the old man's ears, and how must his heart have sunk within him when he listened to such words as these :—‘ I have told Eli that I will judge his house for ever for the iniquity which he knoweth : because his sons made themselves vile, *and he restrained them not.* Therefore have I sworn unto the house of Eli that the iniquity of Eli's house shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering for ever.’<sup>1</sup>

6. It is of great importance that you BEGIN THE TRAINING OF YOUR CHILDREN EARLY. Perhaps one of the greatest mistakes into which mothers fall, is the mistake of supposing that the first two or three years of a child's life are unimportant as it regards his training. The truth is, that in reference to the formation of character, these years are the most important of all. From the impressions made, and the principles formed, during these years, your child's character for eternity may take its colour and complexion. You cannot begin too early.

<sup>1</sup> 1 Samuel iii. 13, 14.

Long before your child can speak, he is susceptible of moral training. We frequently hear mothers speak of their children being too young to be taught obedience ; but no child is too young to be taught obedience, who knows what he is expected to do, or from what he is expected to refrain ; and the mother who acts on the maxim that children may have their own way for a certain number of years, or even of months, will find to her cost, that *that* lesson at least will not speedily be forgotten. When I speak of early training, I refer, not to *intellectual*, but to *moral* training. Intellectual training is, perhaps, in the most of cases, commenced too soon ; while the other and more important is neglected, though it is that of which an infant child is most capable.

Again, then, we repeat, begin early. Bend the twig while it is yet tender ; not only is it then most easily bent, but it is most likely to retain the form you give it.

7. If you would train up your children in the way they should go, you must **MAKE ALL THEIR TRAINING BEAR, DIRECTLY OR INDIRECTLY, ON THEIR SPIRITUAL AND ETERNAL WELL-BEING.** By this I do not mean that you should be al-

ways speaking to them *about* religion, for there is such a thing as forming in the mind of a child, a permanent association between religious truth and the feeling of weariness or disgust ; and against this evil, parents should especially guard. —I mean, that you should yourself always keep in view their eternal interests. It is not merely for the employments of the few fleeting years of the present life that you are training them,—it is for the service and enjoyment of God for ever. Oh ! what a noble work is yours ! Contemplate it in the light of eternity, and you will feel that it is the most dignified—the most glorious employment in which an immortal being can engage. The thought that it is for eternity, will sustain you amidst every difficulty, and cheer you on in your noble career. Yes, it is a noble career ! for when all the honour, and pomp, and glare of mere temporal pursuits have passed away, the effects of *your work* shall remain ; and ceaseless ages shall record the triumph of your faith, and fortitude, and patience.

A celebrated painter was asked why he bestowed so much labour on all his productions ? His answer was, ' I paint for eternity.' Christian

mothers ! in your case this is literally true ;—you train your children for eternity. Ought you not, then, to exercise unceasing care and vigilance ?

8. It is, surely, scarcely necessary for me to add, as my last observation, that if you would train up your children in the way they should go, you must **ABOUND IN PRAYER**—fervent, wrestling, believing prayer. Without this, you can do nothing as it ought to be done. Great and arduous are your duties, and great is the preparation you need for the discharge of them. —You need wisdom,—you need firmness,—you need decision,—you need patience,—you need self-control,—you need perseverance ; and whither can you go for these, but to the mercy-seat of Him ‘ who giveth unto all liberally, and upbraideth not.’ ‘ Every good gift, and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights.’<sup>1</sup> Continual prayer will fit you for your duties, and make these duties pleasant. By prayer you will lay hold on the strength of God, and be able to say with the apostle, ‘ I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me.’<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> James i. 17.

<sup>2</sup> Philippians iv. 13.

I close these remarks by reminding you once more of the magnitude of your responsibility. To you (under God) are entrusted the destinies of the rising generation, and, through it, the destinies of the generations following. The world looks to you,—the Church of God looks to you,—the spirits of departed saints look to you,—the angelic hosts look to you,—God himself looks to you, as those whose influence shall tell for ever on thousands yet unborn. Let a sense of the importance of your high calling, animate you to run with patience the race that is set before you; and when you have finished your course, and are called to give in your account, yours will be the unspeakable happiness of being welcomed into the realms of glory, by the approving voice of your Saviour-God, ‘Well done, good and faithful servants, enter ye into the joy of your Lord.’ And, with all your loved ones around you, you will stand on the Mount Zion ‘when earth and seas have fled,’ and with a heart overflowing with gratitude, will cast your crowns at Jesus’ feet, saying, ‘Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory.’

## LECTURE III.

---

### A MOTHER'S ENCOURAGEMENT.

‘Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.’—PROVERBS xxii. 6.

ALL who labour in the Lord’s vineyard, whatever department of it they occupy, need encouragement. There is so much to discourage and depress,—to harass and vex, that unless we have some never-failing spring of support and consolation, we shall soon faint by the way. Those know this, who have to strive, not only against wind and tide, but against a thousand under-currents and whirling eddies, which would turn them from their course, or suck them into the abyss beneath. It is no easy matter to persevere, from day to day, in the faithful discharge even of the most common duties, especially if physical weakness, or a morbid sensitiveness of

mind, combine with other depressing influences of a more ordinary kind, to induce that languor which drowns the soul in inglorious lethargy, or that recklessness in which the spirit, after being chafed and fretted till it is well nigh worn away, throws aside the reins, and gives itself up to 'calm despair.' And, perhaps, in no department of christian exertion, are influences of a depressing kind more numerous, than in that which you, as mothers, occupy. But, blessed be God, there is an exhaustless fund of all you need for your encouragement and support.

1. Permit me to direct your attention, first of all, to the encouraging fact, that **THE WORK IN WHICH YOU ARE ENGAGED, IS, DIRECTLY AND PRE-EMINENTLY, THE WORK OF GOD.** The great end for which the created universe was called into being, and for which it is upheld from age to age, is the **MANIFESTATION OF THE DIVINE GLORY.** In all that God does, or permits to be done, He is actuated by a regard to this. All agencies, angelic and human,—rational and irrational,—animate and inanimate,—are made to subserve, in all their actings, this great design. The tendency of all the apparently involved

working of the whole machinery of the universe, whether moral or physical, is to produce motion in this one direction. In the salvation of fallen man by the remedial provisions of the gospel, this great end is especially promoted,—for ‘ by the Church’ is ‘ *made known*,’ even ‘ unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places,’ ‘ the manifold wisdom of God.’<sup>1</sup> And by what instrumentality is a redeemed Church to be raised up from amongst the sinful children of men? By the instrumentality of those who have themselves, by the grace of God, been delivered from the guilt and the power of sin, and made ‘ vessels unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the Master’s use.’ By means of human agency, the multitude which no man can number, is to be gathered home to the Redeemer’s fold.—And *you* are they whom God has appointed to train up those who are to embark in this glorious enterprise. To *you* is committed the task of moulding and fashioning the human agencies, by which God’s great purpose of glorifying Himself for ever in the sight of all intelligent beings, is to be accomplished. In *your* hands

<sup>1</sup> Ephesians iii. 10.

are the leaders of the public sentiment of the next generation,—the Luthers,—the Knoxes,—the Wesleys,—the Whitefields,—the Wilberforces of a future age ; they are in your hands, and through them you wield the destinies of millions yet unborn. I have already spoken of the awful responsibility of such a situation ; but there is another light in which, likewise, I would have you view it.—Consider how honourable a situation it is ; to have the most important part of the work of God committed to you !<sup>1</sup> Consider how near it brings you to God ; to have the training, not merely of his soldiers, but of those who are to officer his armies, and lead them on to glorious, yet bloodless victory. You occupy the highest, the noblest, the most honourable position in which a human being can be placed. Murmur not that you are excluded from camps, and cabinets, and senates ; yours is a higher vocation. You are directly engaged in that work which has employed the tongues, the

<sup>1</sup> It is remarked by the late Rev. Joseph Emerson, that, ' were the angel Gabriel commissioned to visit our world, for the purpose of instructing a single child, and that a child of the meanest beggar, he would consider it a great and noble object.'

pens, the labours, the hearts, of the world's best and wisest in every age ;—the work for which ‘ the goodly fellowship of the prophets’ lived,—for which ‘ the glorious company of the apostles’ laboured,—for which ‘ the noble army of martyrs’ died. To witness the progress of this work, angels stoop from their exalted thrones, and watch, with intensest interest, the unfolding of every plan, the developement of every principle, and the accomplishment of every event, which bears upon it. For the furtherance of this work, the Son of the Highest left the throne of heaven, and became a wanderer on earth, submitting to the reproach and scorn of men—to the anguish and ignominy of the cross. For this, also, the Divine Spirit is sent forth from the Father and the Son ;—in short, this is the work, for the furtherance of which the noblest energies in heaven and earth have been, and are, continually put forth.—Compared with it, the fleeting interests of time dwindle into a speck.

But how is it that we derive from such considerations matter of encouragement ? Very obviously ; as, for instance, thus :—If you are engaged in a work which God has more at heart

(if we may so speak) than aught else in the universe, because thereby His own glory is most abundantly manifested, can you for a moment suppose that He will leave you to toil in that work, unnoticed and uncared for? Such a supposition were alike impious and absurd; to admit it would be to impeach the Divine wisdom, as well as the Divine goodness. In immediate connexion, then, with the consideration that it is the work of God in which you are engaged, consider, in the second place:—

**2. THAT GOD IS ALWAYS WILLING TO GRANT YOU THE STRENGTH AND WISDOM YOU NEED FOR THE SUCCESSFUL DISCHARGE OF YOUR IMPORTANT DUTIES.** On the throne of grace He ever sits, ready to dispense blessings, countless and rich, to all who ask.—Never is His ear turned away from the cry of the needy suppliant. What an inexhaustible fund of encouragement does this truth present! At what time your heart is overwhelmed, look to the Rock that is higher than you. In the confidence of filial love, cast your burden upon the Lord, assured that He will sustain you. He cannot disappoint the expectations which His own word teaches you

to cherish. He will be your Instructor, your Counsellor, your Guide, your Comforter, your Refuge, your Fortress, your Sun, and your Shield. Do you feel that you want strength? Go to God;—He is the Almighty One in whom all strength dwells. Do you feel that you want wisdom? Go to God;—He is ‘the only wise God,’<sup>1</sup> and of His wisdom ‘He giveth unto all men liberally, and upbraideth not.’<sup>2</sup> Do you feel that you want patience? Go to God;—He is ‘the God of patience.’<sup>3</sup> Do you feel that you are in danger of fainting by the way? Go to God;—‘He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength.’<sup>4</sup> In short, do you feel bowed down under a sense of insufficiency and unworthiness? Go to God;—your ‘sufficiency is of Him,’<sup>5</sup>—He ‘is able to make all grace to abound towards you; that ye, having always all-sufficiency in all things, may be ready to every good work.’<sup>6</sup> In all generations He has been the dwelling-place of His people,—a refuge in the day of distress,—a stay and support in the time of trouble. Listen

<sup>1</sup> 1 Tim. i. 17.      <sup>2</sup> James i. 5.      <sup>3</sup> Rom. xv. 5.

<sup>4</sup> Isaiah xl. 29.      <sup>5</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 4.      <sup>6</sup> 2 Cor. ix. 8.

to the sweet strains of the sweet singer of Israel, who had often tried God's faithfulness to His promises : ' Oh magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt His name together. I sought the Lord, and He heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto Him, and were lightened, and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the Lord encamps round about them that fear him, and delivereth them. Oh taste and see that the Lord is good ; blessed is the man that trusteth in Him.'<sup>1</sup>

3. There is ground of encouragement in the assurance of God's word, that **IF YOU DILIGENTLY USE THE PROPER MEANS, AND USE THEM IN THE PROPER SPIRIT, YOUR EFFORTS TO TRAIN YOUR CHILDREN FOR HIM WILL BE SUCCESSFUL.** I have formerly said that all your success must come from God. Whatever human instrumentality is employed in the cultivation of His vineyard, it is He alone that giveth the increase. Man may sow the good seed of the kingdom, and water it with his prayers and his tears, but

<sup>1</sup> Psalm xxxiv. 3-8.

without the quickening energy of the Divine Spirit, the seed will not germinate,—there will be no fruit. The Scriptures constantly keep before us this all-important truth, that in every case in which ‘the word of the truth of the Gospel’ has a saving effect, it is the Lord that carries it home to the heart, and causes it there to take root and to spring up. ‘The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.’<sup>1</sup> As well might we attempt in our own strength to remove the mountains, or to quell the raging of the sea when it is lashed into wild commotion by a furious tempest, as attempt, in our own strength, to quicken a soul ‘dead in trespasses and sins.’ The power of the Highest alone is adequate to this mighty work.—It is *all* His doing, and He will have *all* the glory. ‘Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but *ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?* I have planted, Apollos watered; but *God gave the increase.* So then, neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but *God that giveth the increase.*’<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Acts xvi. 14.

<sup>2</sup> 2 Cor. iii. 5-7.

But the Scriptures teach us something more than this ; they teach also, that in all that concerns the progress of God's spiritual kingdom, there is a divinely instituted connexion between the right use of the appointed means, and the attainment of the promised end ; a connexion, not accidental and precarious, but fixed and invariable. Where the divinely instituted means are employed in the divinely instituted way, there is not a probability merely, but an absolute certainty, that the end will be attained. And where the promised end is not attained, we may be assured there has been something amiss with regard to the use of the means.

It is of great importance that this truth be clearly realized. Erroneous impressions regarding the connexion of means and end in spiritual things are very widely diffused, and it is to be feared that they exercise a most pernicious influence on the people of God,—weakening their faith in the Divine promises, and paralyzing their spiritual energies. It is an indication and an effect of the weakness of the human mind, as well as of its imperfect discipline, that we are so prone to take partial views of divine truth,—

allowing one portion of that truth to conceal from us another perhaps equally important,—to thrust a third out of its proper place, and to deprive a fourth of its due proportion. We select some particular truth, which we take under our special patronage, and fix the eye on it, to the exclusion of others. The consequence is, that this favourite truth, if it does not come by and bye to occupy the whole field of vision, at least occupies so large a portion of it as to prevent us from perceiving other truths in their correct position, and their proper relative importance. This is, perhaps, one of the most fruitful sources of those vain janglings by which the Church of God has been rent asunder, and divided into rival sects and jarring factions. One man, for instance, fixes his gaze solely on the doctrine of God's free and sovereign grace, losing sight of the doctrine of man's responsibility, until he comes to speak of men as if they were mere machines, —the victims of a stern, relentless destiny. Another, in his anxiety to avoid this error, flies off to the opposite extreme; and, fixing his gaze solely on the doctrine of man's responsibility, loses sight of the doctrine of God's sovereign

grace, until he comes to speak of men as if they were independent of God, and were as gods to themselves. Shall we attempt to decide which of the two is right ? Nay ; rather let us at once acknowledge that both are equally wrong. Each of them holds part of the truth ; neither of them holds the whole of it ; and even that part which each holds is perverted, by being put out of its proper place.

But to return. I have said that erroneous impressions regarding the connexion of means and end in spiritual things are widely diffused. This connexion seems by many to be viewed as in a great measure accidental and precarious. Perhaps vague and partial views of the doctrine of Divine sovereignty may have contributed to the promotion of this scepticism in the minds of some. Let it not be supposed that we undervalue, or that we would in the slightest degree detract from, this glorious doctrine. God forbid ! There is no doctrine on which we feel disposed to take higher ground, or to which we can turn with a stronger feeling of delight, than the doctrine of God's absolute, uncontrollable sovereignty. We rejoice in it, as the safeguard

of the interests of righteousness and truth ; we cling to it, as the anchor of our hopes respecting the ultimate and everlasting well-being of all holy intelligencies. God is a sovereign, and in sovereignty He acts, bestowing his blessings *where, and when, and how, he pleases.* We see nothing in this fact terrific or discouraging, but all the contrary. We look on the Divine sovereignty as a cause of joy and thanksgiving ; and most cordially can we say with the Psalmist, ' The Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice, let the multitudes of isles be glad thereof.'

But let us see that we do not misunderstand this doctrine, or allow our belief of it to prevent us from perceiving other truths, revealed with equal clearness. God's sovereignty is not fitful and precarious in its actings. It bears no resemblance to that which, in weak and changeable man, we call caprice or waywardness. When God has made certain specific promises, His sovereignty does not *so* come between His promise and the fulfilment of it, as to render the fulfilment uncertain, and thus deprive us of a firm resting-place for that hope which is ' an

<sup>1</sup> Psalm xcvii. 1.

anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast.' In the bestowment of his promised blessings, in so far as our present subject leads us to contemplate these blessings, He acts according to fixed principles, of which He has himself given us the knowledge. He may bestow his blessings where and how he pleases, but He has been graciously pleased to inform us in His word of certain circumstances in which He *will* bestow them. He has engaged, that, when certain means are used on our part, and used in a certain way, His Spirit will accompany the use of them with His blessing, so that the end contemplated shall be accomplished. He was under no obligation to bestow His blessing on any ; but having promised to grant that blessing in connexion with the use of certain means, he has thus (if such a phrase be allowable) bound Himself by His own sovereign engagement, and that engagement *will* be fulfilled.

These remarks are applicable to the work of God generally, in all its departments. He has promised that His word shall not return to him void, but shall accomplish that which He pleaseth, and prosper in the thing whereto

He sent it.<sup>1</sup> In the use, therefore, of the appointed means, it is alike our duty and our privilege to believe, with an unhesitating and unwavering faith, that our 'labour is not in vain in the Lord.' Thus do we honour God, when we lay hold on His faithful promise, and rest on *that*, instead of allowing our minds to be harassed and perplexed by vague notions of an uncertainty, or a caprice, or a waywardness, which we may dignify with the name of Sovereignty,

<sup>1</sup> Isaiah iv. 11. It may be remarked here in passing, that this passage is not unfrequently perverted in a most unwarrantable manner. We often hear it introduced thus, 'God's word shall accomplish that which He pleaseth, and prosper in the thing whereto He sent it, *by proving either the savour of life unto life, or the savour of death unto death.*' Now, it is very true that God's word does prove the savour of death unto death to many, by their wilful rejection of it; and an appalling truth it is. But this is not 'that which God pleaseth,'—this is not 'the thing whereto He hath sent' His word. That which God pleaseth is, 'that the wicked turn from his way and live' (Ezekiel xxxiii. 11); and the accomplishment of *this* effect in the case of those to whom His word is sent, is 'the thing whereto He hath sent it,' and in which He hath promised that it 'shall prosper.' Thus understood, the passage affords a strong ground of encouragement for those who 'labour in the word and doctrine.'

but which, in fact, bears no resemblance thereto.

Christian mothers ! you have not only all the encouragement which may be derived from such general promises of success to those who seek the salvation of immortal souls ; you have, moreover, other and special promises peculiarly applicable to your own department of labour. Our limits will not permit us to take a survey of these,—nor is it necessary. We glance only at the language of our text, ‘ Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it.’ I cannot understand this language otherwise than as an express assurance, that faithfulness on the part of the parent *will* be followed with the Divine blessing, so that he who is properly trained in youth, will be found afterwards walking in ‘ the way of life.’ I am aware, indeed, that many demur to this interpretation, and consider the text merely as ‘ a moral maxim’ containing a general affirmation, which, though it may hold good in the majority of cases, yet admits of many exceptions. There are cases, it is contended, in which, after all has been done that parental

faithfulness demands, the result is unsatisfactory and disastrous;—the child, though ‘trained up in the way he should go,’ turns aside into the path of the destroyer, and, so far as human observation can ascertain, perishes in his sin. By this lax interpretation, the amount of encouragement derivable from the text is immensely reduced, and, instead of affording a ground of full confidence, it affords only a degree of hope, stronger or weaker, according as the temperament happens to be more or less sanguine.

In such a view of the passage we cannot at all concur. It seems to us utterly inconsistent with that reverence for the word of God which should characterize those who regard that word as the product of infinite wisdom and truth. Surely if God has announced a principle like this in the most unqualified terms, it is not for us to qualify it. If He has not intimated that there are exceptions, it is not for us to make them. ‘LET GOD BE TRUE.’

There are, indeed, general statements in the word of God, which must, from the very nature of the case, be understood in a somewhat limited sense. But in all such cases the limitation re-

quired is obvious. The present statement is not at all similar to these, and does not seem to admit of limitation by the application of any sound principle of interpretation. We cannot legitimately reason against the absolute truth of a divine promise, from cases in which it may not seem to us to be fulfilled, for we see not the whole. And especially in cases such as the present, where the fulfilment is suspended on our own faithfulness, all such reasonings are alike presumptuous and futile. Let it be granted that there are many instances in which children who have been well trained, *so far as man can perceive*, disappoint the hopes of their parents, and depart from the way in which they ought to go. Who shall take upon him confidently to affirm, that the parents have indeed faithfully discharged *all* their duty ? Who but God himself is an adequate judge of this ? Or what parent, who is at all aware of his own imperfection, when he sees his child turn aside from the holy commandment delivered unto him, will lift up his eyes to heaven, and, with unfaltering tongue, avow that he has done all he ought to have done, or all he might have done, to prevent a result s

disastrous? Can any parent declare that he has never erred in the management of those committed to his charge? And if not, surely it is more wise, and more becoming in every respect, to ascribe the failure to some error on the parent's part, even though that error may not in the meantime be discovered, than to modify the express statements of God's word, and to introduce limitations and make room for exceptions, where He has made none.

Esteem it, then, your privilege, Christian mothers, to take the declaration of the text as it is, and to rest on it as the true and faithful promise of 'God, who cannot lie.' If thus you do, you will find it 'an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast.' The God of heaven engages, that, if you are faithful to your trust, He will crown your labours with success. As you watch over the dawning of the youthful mind,—as you endeavour to teach the young and pliant affections to flow forth towards God,—as you strive, day after day, to instil the love of holiness, and the hatred of sin,—feel not as if you were trying a doubtful experiment, but let your soul be animated and cheered by the certainty of success.

He who made that mind,—who inspired these affections,—who has appointed you to the honourable, though arduous, task of training the soul for Him, has not called you to go a warfare on your own charges. He is with you ; His smile will cheer you in your work ; His blessing will render that work successful. And though, perhaps, you may not see it in your day, yet will it assuredly come to pass, according to His gracious promise, that those whom you have led in the path to heaven, shall form part of the bright and glorious company which shall for ever stand on the sea of glass before the throne, having the harps of God in their hands, and the love of God in their hearts, and the praise of God on their lips ;—and there shall you recognise them, not as your children only, but as your spiritual children, by your instrumentality raised to the high honour and enjoyment of being the children of God, the brethren of Jesus Christ. Oh what a thrill of holy delight will be experienced by the godly mother, when she sees the objects of her maternal solicitude, over whom she had long watched, and wept, and prayed, brought home in safety, after the weary pilgrimage of

life, to that 'land of pure delight,' where there is 'nothing to hurt or destroy,'—no reproach of the enemy,—no separation of friends,—no alienation of hearts,—no anguish of spirit,—but all is perfect peace, perfect love, perfect purity :—

‘ And not a wave of sorrow rolls  
Across the tranquil breast.’

**4. You may derive much encouragement from the fact that THOUSANDS OF CHRISTIAN MOTHERS HAVE TRIED THE FAITHFULNESS OF GOD TO HIS PROMISE, AND HAVE HAD THE HAPPINESS OF WITNESSING THE SUCCESSS OF THEIR LABOURS IN THE CONVERSION OF THEIR OFFSPRING.** The history of the Church of God is full of instances in point. Let us look at one or two. The case of Augustine, one of 'the fathers' of the Christian Church, is a striking one. He was one of the brightest ornaments of Christianity in the latter part of the fourth and the beginning of the fifth century. But up to his twenty-eighth year he lived in sin. From his remarkable 'Confessions,' written by himself after his conversion, we learn, that he broke loose from every restraint, and gave himself up 'to work all uncleanness with greediness.' He had, however,

a pious mother, and amidst all his wanderings, her tears and prayers came up for a memorial before God. At length her cry was heard, and the answer came. From her son's own lips she one day received the glad tidings of his conversion to God, and the voice of lamentation was changed into the song of praise. Not long after, as they were journeying together, she said, ' My son, what have I to do here any longer ? The only thing for which I wished to live was your conversion, and *that* the Lord has now granted me in an abundant manner.' Five days after, she was seized with a fever, which, in a few days more, wafted her spirit into that blissful region where all tears are for ever wiped away. And the son, for whom she had shed so many tears, and breathed so many prayers, lived to be the admiration of his age, and the means of the conversion of thousands of his fellow-men.

That eminent servant of Christ, John Newton, was the son of a praying mother. Even at the worst period of his life, profane and dissolute as he was, the influence of the pious counsels which he received in childhood, was never obl-

erated. He has himself left it on record, that in the midst of the most daring wickedness, the remembrance of his mother's prayers haunted him continually ; and that at times these impressions were so vivid, that ' he could almost feel his mother's soft hand resting on his head, as when she used to kneel beside him in early boyhood, and plead for God's blessing on his soul.' There is no reason to doubt that these impressions, received in childhood, and retaining their hold of the spirit in after life, were among the principal means by which he was arrested in his career of sin, and made a zealous and successful propagator of that gospel which he had so long despised.

The pious Dr Doddridge, whose ' Rise and Progress of Religion in the Soul' is said to have been instrumental in the conversion of some thousands, was deeply impressed with a sense of divine things long before he could read, by means of some Scripture prints on the Dutch tiles of the chimney, which were employed by a pious mother for the purpose of directing his attention to the important truths of religion.

A great and good man said, a little before his

death, ‘ I think I should have been an infidel, had not my mother taught me, when a child, to kneel by my bed and say, “ Our Father who art in heaven.” ’<sup>1</sup>

Richard Cecil says of himself, ‘ I had a pious mother, who dropped things in my way. I could never rid myself of them. I liked to be an infidel in company rather than when alone. I could not divest myself of my better principles. My mother would talk to me, and weep as she talked. I flung out of the house with an oath, but I wept too when I got into the street.’ This child of many prayers and admonitions became a burning and a shining light in the Church of God.

A faithful and zealous minister of Christ gives the following account of himself, in writing to a friend :—‘ As to my labours, to a spectator I may appear to do much ; to myself, it appears scarcely any thing. Ah ! Sir, you know but little of my obligations to almighty grace and redeeming love. I look back with dismay and

<sup>1</sup> It is right that children should be taught to pray, but let mothers remember that merely teaching them to *say their prayers*, is not teaching them *to pray*. Let

horror to the time when I led the van in wickedness. Regardless of the prayers, and tears, and groans of a pious mother, I rushed upon the thick bosses of God's buckler. \* \* \* \* Even now my heart bleeds at the thought of the nights, when, mad with intoxication, I have returned to my tender mother, between two and three o'clock, burst open the window, poured out a torrent of abuse, and sunk upon the bed, a monster of iniquity. Next morning I have been aroused by a mournful voice, smothered with heavy sobs and tears. I have listened, and to my inexpressible astonishment, found it was my

them be taught *what* they need, *where* they may obtain it, and *how* they are to ask it. It is to be feared that many children grow up with a confirmed misapprehension of what prayer is, from the heartless manner in which they have been accustomed, during infancy, to repeat certain forms, to the language of which they attached no definite meaning. It is not meant by this indiscriminately to condemn the use of set forms of prayer; in many cases such forms are doubtless useful, in some they may be even necessary: and we cannot forget that when the disciples came to the Saviour, saying, 'Lord, teach us to pray,' He gave them the outline of a form, and instructed them *after that manner* to pray. At the same time, however, He carefully instructed them regarding the true nature of prayer as a spiritual service.

mother pouring out her soul in this language,—  
“ O Lord, Oh mercy, mercy, mercy, mercy upon  
my poor child. Lord, I will not, cannot give  
him up,—he is still my child. Surely he is not  
yet out of the reach of mercy. O Lord, hear,  
hear, I beseech thee, a mother’s prayers. Spare,  
oh spare, for Christ’s sake, the son of her old  
age. O Absalom my son ; O Absalom my son,  
my son !” Yes ! precious mother, thy prayers  
are now answered, and thy child, thy worthless  
guilty child, still lives a monument of boundless  
grace and incomprehensible mercy.’

But why should I multiply examples ? Time  
would fail me were I to attempt to set before  
you the tithe of what is on record to prove the  
faithfulness of the Hearer of the mother’s pray-  
er. Let one fact more suffice. It is one which  
speaks volumes in proof of our position. An  
inquiry was instituted in the United States, in  
six Theological Seminaries, belonging to three  
different denominations of Christians, by which  
it was ascertained, that of 507 students who  
were being educated for the ministry, no fewer  
than 428 were children of praying mothers.

Christian mothers ! be of good courage ! You

are surrounded with a great cloud of witnesses ;—witnesses to the faithfulness of God's promise,—witnesses to the power of believing prayer,—witnesses to the efficacy of sound religious instruction. Go forward in your work with holy confidence. Great and many, indeed, are your difficulties, but greater is He that is for you than all that can be against you. ‘ Trust ye in the Lord for ever, for with the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength.’ ‘ In due time you shall reap if you faint not.’

May the Lord grant you grace to be faithful, and may you at last have the unspeakable happiness of entering, along with all who have been committed to your care, into ‘ the heavenly holy place,’ there to celebrate for ever the praise of redeeming love, and to serve God day and night without ceasing.

---

I have addressed these Lectures to ‘ Christian Mothers ;’ but as they may possibly be perused by some who are not Christians, I feel that I cannot allow them to go to press without adding

a few words to all who may read them, and who have not the Spirit of God witnessing with their spirits, that they are the children of God (Romans viii. 16).

Reader ! are *you* a child of God ? Do not answer the question hastily. Thousands imagine they are, who will find at last that they have been mistaken. The word of God teaches us that men may not only live deceived, but die deceived, flattering themselves that all is well, and never discovering their mistake, till they open their eyes in the place of woe. Oh ! think it not strange, therefore, that we urge upon you the inquiry, *Are you* a child of God ? Ponder the solemn question. Keep it before you. And remember that you are *not* a child of God unless you have been changed in heart and life by the belief of ‘ the truth as it is in Jesus.’ What, then, is the state of your heart ? Is it supremely set on the trifles, the vanities, the pursuits of the present life ; or is it set on those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right hand of God ? Is it the abode of unholy passions ; or is it a temple of <sup>the</sup> Holy Ghost, filled with peace, and love,

and holy joy ? What is the state of your life ? Are you living after the sight of your own eyes, according to the course of this world ; or are you adorning the doctrines of God the Saviour, by a conversation becoming the Gospel,—bringing forth the fruit of righteousness, and keeping yourself unspotted from the world ? Oh ! be not deceived ! If you have not been changed in heart and life, you are *not* a child of God ; and *until* you are thus changed by the belief of the truth, you are in the gall of bitterness, and the bond of iniquity. Your external observance of the forms of religion cannot save you ; your amiable dispositions cannot save you ; your worldly morality cannot save you ; your deeds of beneficence cannot save you. With all these, you may find 'Heaven's gate' shut against you, and be cast 'out into utter darkness, where there is wailing and gnashing of teeth.' Do you hesitate to believe this ? Do you say, 'This is a hard saying ?' Ah ! reader ! if it were *my* saying merely, it would be a small matter ; but it is the saying of Him by whom you are to be judged. ' Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.' (John iii. 3.)

These are the words of ‘ the faithful and true witness,’ and sooner shall heaven and earth pass away, than one word of His fall to the ground. Oh ! put not away from you the solemn impression which these words are fitted to produce, by saying that God is merciful, and perhaps after all he may allow you to escape. I know, and rejoice to know, that God is merciful,—infinitely merciful. Were He not so, you and I had, long ere now, been shut up in the prison-house of despair, without one ray of hope to enlighten the blackness of darkness. But I know, likewise, that God is true as well as merciful, and that His mercy can never be exercised in such a manner as to destroy His truth. His mercy, infinite though it be, cannot be exercised towards those who put away from them ‘ the word of the truth of the Gospel ;’ for this would be to falsify His own express declaration. His mercy is *now* exhibited to you in His word ;—His mercy has provided an atonement for sin, by which you may *now* be saved ;—His mercy is setting before you this atonement as the ground of hope ; but if you ‘ neglect so great salvation,’ then, when the axe is laid to the root

of the tree, and you are cut down, His mercy, so far as you are concerned, will for ever cease, and you will be left to experience the fearful effect of *mercy despised*, and *justice executed*.

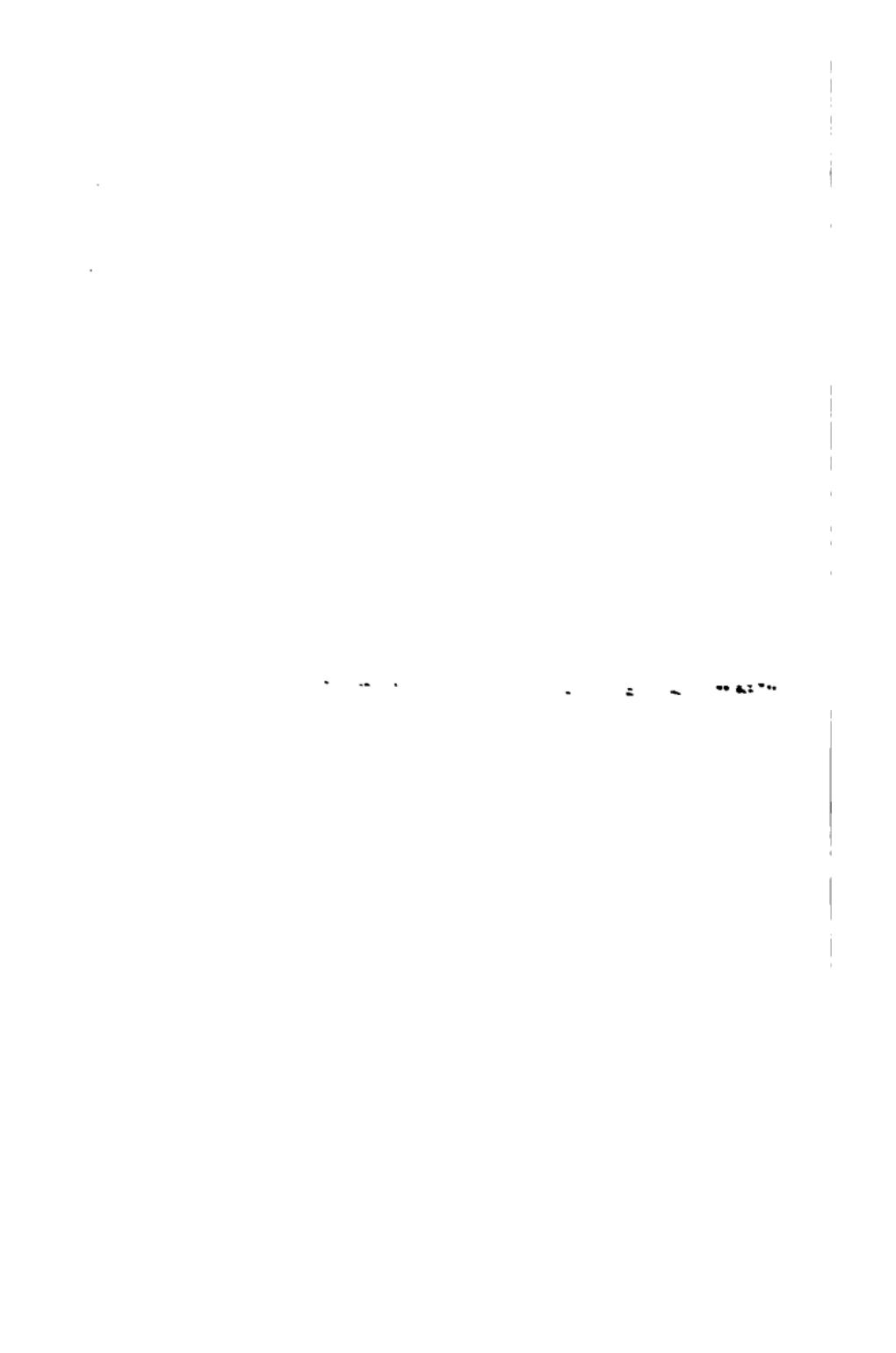
Do you inquire, 'What must I do to be saved?' Blessed be God, the answer is at hand, 'Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved' (Acts xvi. 31). You require not, in order to your acceptance with Him, to 'come before Him with burnt-offerings or calves of a year old; you require not to 'give your first-born for your transgression, the fruit of your body for the sin of your soul.' 'He hath showed thee, O man, what is good.' The Lord hath himself provided a Lamb for an offering. On him He hath laid the iniquity of us all. He was wounded for our transgressions, and bruised for our iniquities. 'Behold,' therefore, 'the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.' Come unto the Father, through the Son, and you will in no wise be cast out.

The work by which alone you can be saved, has been already accomplished. Jesus hath 'finished transgression, and made an end of sins,

and brought in everlasting righteousness.' He hath opened up the way of access for you to the mercy-seat of God ; and now you may behold the God whom you have offended sitting on that mercy-seat, dispensing pardon and life ; you may hear His gracious voice inviting,—yea, beseeching and entreating you to come unto Him, that your soul may live. Cast your soul, all guilty as it is, on the finished work of Immanuel, and you will not be rejected. Think not that you have *something to do*, in order to commend yourself to His favour, ere you can 'believe on Him that justifieth the ungodly.' Make no attempt to render yourself worthy of acceptance. Bring no price in your hand. God will not make merchandisc of the blessings of salvation. He will give eternal life *freely*, like a God, or He will not give it at all ; and you must receive it, *freely*, as a sinner, guilty and condemned, having no claim upon God, or you will not receive it at all. Are not these His own gracious words?—'Ho ! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters ; and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat ; yea, come, buy wine and milk, *without money, and*

*without price* (Isaiah lv. 1). Inquire no longer, then, ‘ Wherewith shall I come before the Lord ?’ for ‘ the Word is *nigh thee*, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart ; that is, the word of faith, which we preach ; that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.’ (Romans x. 8-10).

THE END.



—

**W. OLIPHANT JUN. AND CO., PRINTERS, SOUTH BRIDGE.**

